



# Adoption & Adoption Subsidy

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## Purpose

When courts terminate parental rights, the DHS attempts to find permanent adoptive families for children who have been abused or neglected. Most of these children qualify for adoption subsidies that help families meet their needs. To promote permanency, the department's goal is to find an adoptive home as quickly as possible. At any point in time about 100 children are waiting an adoptive home. For information on adopting a child, including pictures of children awaiting adoption, call Iowa KidsNet at 1-800-243-0756 or [www.iowakidsnet.com](http://www.iowakidsnet.com)

## Who

As of July 1, 2010, the adoptive parents of 8,454 children were receiving subsidies. Subsidies are available if:

- The child has a special need (including a diagnosed physical, mental or emotional disability), is older, or is a member of a sibling group of three or more children; and
- The state is unable to place the child for adoption without the subsidy.

*Profile of children receiving an adoption subsidy.*

Age		Race/Ethnicity	
0 - 5	14%	Caucasian	68%
6 - 11	41%	African American	20%
12 - 15	27%	Hispanic/Latino	8%
Over 16	18%	Native American	3%
		Asian	1%

## What

- Via KidsNet, the department recruits and trains prospective foster and adoptive adults.
- The department provides a subsidy until the child reaches age 18, or until age 21 if there is a diagnosed disability. The DHS and families negotiate a subsidy based on needs of the child, with the upper limit being the rate that would have been paid to foster parents if the child was not adopted. In SFY 2010, the minimum daily rate for family foster care was \$15.54. Federal law prohibits a means test when determining subsidies. More than 90 percent of adoptions arranged by DHS involve a subsidy.
- The department provides Medicaid health insurance to adopted children receiving subsidies.

## How are We Doing?

- Adoption performance is measured on timeliness, not overall numbers. Timeliness is measured from the day of removal to the day of adoption. Most removed children are reunited, but when Iowa courts terminate parental rights, states must quickly find a permanent home. The national standard is to find an adoptive home for 32 percent of these children within two years of removal. Iowa's performance is 53 percent within two years.
- The annual number of adoptions is trending lower after several years averaging about 1,000 a year.
- Iowa regularly and publicly tracks progress in this and other child welfare areas. See <https://dhssecure.dhs.state.ia.us/digitaldashboard/>

SFY	Total Adoptions
2007	1,050
2008	1,055
2009	937
2010	873